

REMARKS

In the above reference Office Action, several objections were raised and rejections proffered under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Applicant respectfully asserts that the above amendments have obviated these issues. In addition, claim 25 (subject to the restriction requirement) has been amended so as to no longer depend from itself.

Claims 1-6, 8, 11, 13, 17 and 22 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Sandbank. Applicant respectfully asserts that Sandbank fails to teach each and every element of the claims; accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Specifically, claim 1 includes a carrier system that has two coplanar portions (the supporting section and the protective sheet). These two portions are defined so as to be non-overlapping and adjoined along a common boundary.

Sandbank fails to teach a dressing having a carrier system that is co-planar and non-overlapping. Rather, the reference has a laminar member (5,6) that is folded over to form an applicator (4). The reference further includes a protector sheet (11), which is caused to be folded over the hinge (7) of the laminar member (5). Accordingly, Sandbank cannot anticipate the claims and the rejection under 35 USC 102(b) must be withdrawn.

The presently claimed invention provides an advantageous applicator that permits easy separation of the carrier sheet, leaving the supporting portion in place and adhered (in part) to the dressing. The user can grip the supporting member (e.g., the non-overlapping region) which acts as a handle. The portion of the dressing exposed by removal of the protect sheet is adhered to the skin and the supporting member is then easily separated. The presently claimed embodiments are further advantageous in that a single layer is provided for the carrier system while still permitting control over the dressing when a portion of that layer is separated. Further, this novel approach allows for a smooth handling of the dressing and the ability to limit or preclude wrinkling of the dress.

Sandbank provides a minimal portion that is initially exposed (i.e., removing protector 11). This small area is then adhered to the skin and lower laminar member 6 is pulled away. Thus, the vast majority of the covering must be pulled away *after* the dressing is partially applied and in close proximity to the skin making a controlled release difficult. The presently claimed device permits the protective sheet to be removed, exposing a substantial portion of the dressing,

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yet the supporting section is configured to support the dressing in a manner to permit guided application without creasing or wrinkling.

Claims 7, 9, 10, 12, 16 and 18 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sandbank. As these claims depend from those discussed above, they are allowable for at least the same reasons.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully asserts that the pending claims are in condition for allowance and notice of the same is respectfully requested. Should any issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned. No additional fee are believed due at this time; however, the office is authorized to charge any fees actually due and credit any overpayment to deposit account 50-4439.

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Respectfully submitted,
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